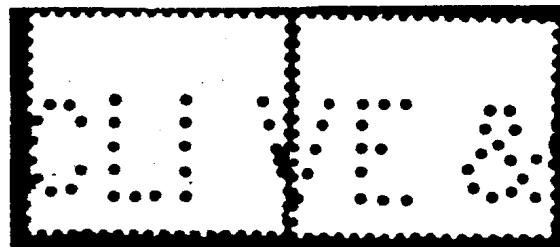


Mike Hempsall sent his 'once joined' vertical pair of stamps to Roy Gault for his inspection. Roy has this reply.

The illustration in the Bulletin (329 N.I. Page 240) was re-constructed from a number of loose examples so it's likely to be a little inaccurate. It was placed against a background strip of three to explain the 'gap' in the "CLI VE" lettering. It was only intended as a quick visual reference.

After analysing your stamps closely, I'm 100% positive that they once read "CLIVE &" rather than "..VE &CLI.." For the purpose of the following I've called the example with "CLI V" the "C" stamp, and "VE &" the "&" stamp.



- [a] There are two long perfs near the base of the "V" on the "C" stamp which marry with two short perfs at the base of the "V" on the "&" stamp. Joining the stamps by ***matching the long and short perforations*** automatically makes it read "CLIVE &".
- [b] If you overlay precisely one stamp on top of the other, (matching the stamp perforations exactly), you can see that the holes forming the base of the 'L' align with the holes forming the base of the "E". There is no $\frac{1}{2}$ mm difference. Sliding one of the stamps by one stamp perforation will show all 7 pins of the 'L' lining up with the corresponding pins forming the "E". Hence there is ***no discernible misalignment*** between the "CLI" and 'VE' portions of the re-constructed die.
- [c] The re-joining the two stamps the 'other' way round ***seems*** to the naked eye to match the 'nibbled' edge of the "&" stamp with the "C" of the "C" stamp breaking through the stamp perforations. However, this places the "&" ***uncomfortably close*** to the "C", and is highly unlikely to have been made like this.
- [d.] Finally, your enlarged illustration of the two stamps matched as point [c] above show the holes to the back of the "C" would have to be ***elongated/oval*** to connect to the 'nibbled' portions of the '&' stamp. Again, this is not likely.

But what can we take from this, apart from the (near?) complete and the date extension to c1915. There is another possibility in that the die could have been in two lines, i.e. "CLIVE &/Co". If so, the two part-holes breaking into the stamp perforations next to the "&" could be the part of the "C" of "CLIVE" from a neighbouring strike. However, I'll stick with "CLIVE &" until more examples come to light.

